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ABSTRACT

A program at Pennsylvania State University is described, wherein American Indian trainees with special knowledges and skills necessary to changing institutions are encouraged to use these skills and knowledges in an effort to change federal, State, and local public and private institutions. Changing institutions to become responsive to clients is the main goal of the training process. One assumption undergirding the program is that administrator behavior is more complex than theory-concept development and testing, and that administrator behaviors demanded in multicultural settings require recognition and analysis. A second premise is that group solidarity is essential for creating a critical mass for change in an institution. Encouraging trainees to keep cultural loyalties, maintain their integrity, and become involved in tasks is an essential part of the training process. The aggregate model is the institutional change model. Clients' involvement in institutional change is the test of the trainees' skills and value commitment. Finally, value commitments are recognized and made explicit. (Author)

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# MULTI-CULTURAL ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING AND CULTURAL CHANGE

by

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What are we trying to do in training school administrators? What kind of view do we have of desirable administrator behavior, or of administrators roles? Do we train administrators to run the system, or to change the system? Do we encourage administrators to be loyal or disloyal to the system, and if the latter, under what circumstances? Do we who train administrators emphasize loyalty first to clients or to the profession? These are hard questions and we have not often asked them. Faced with the opportunity to help prepare Native American professionals we could not avoid these questions.

The choices made by those in the institution training the participants have to be made specific if the trainees are to be in on the game. And participants who are aware of the process may contribute to changing the process as well as the philosophy of the program.

A multi-cultural program has to face the problems of the nature of the school, its purposes, and its function in society. By recognizing the fact that there is a multi culture, certain assumptions about schools and administrator roles are no longer tenable. Among these assumptions are that

1. equal educational opportunity necessarily calls for similar schools, similar programs and equal expenditures

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2. schools treat all children alike
3. Administrators are universalistic in their roles vis-a-vis
4. Access to administrative positions comes by merit and depends upon the needs of the system
5. Administrators must place loyalty to the system before concern for clients and must defend the system at all costs. A corollary to this is that administrators always back teachers before students or parents.
6. Administrators must place the priorities of the whole system ahead of the priorities of the immediate school community. In other words a good administrator sees the "big picture."
7. People trust schools and teachers to do what is best for their children, and everyone is at ease in a school setting.

A multi-cultural society exists, but a multi cultural school system does not. Formulating positions on the above questions and questioning the assumptions may allow administrators to build a system sensitive to the multi culture. It is not expecting too much to expect that a training program will build a multi-cultural system model which will satisfy the demands of a pluralistic society. It is not too much to expect that it will encourage future administrators to know about open systems and their consequences to prepare them to open up educational systems and to construct alternative open models.

Among the problems the multi-cultural program participants have had to examine are: 1) the definition of the school as an organization, how it relates to society and culture, what obligations and exchanges it has with each, and how these obligations and exchanges call for role creation.

For example, does the school create or is it a flow-through mechanism? 2) if the school is an alternative, what are other alternatives possible in this society? 3) What is culture, what is society, and how do each relate to the other? These are not givens, for culture (because of Bob Norris' influence we don't use the term sub-culture) in the Society defines its own life sphere and relationships, segregation and integration are possibilities. 4) What obligations does the Society have toward certain cultures? Does the Society relate the same way to its component cultures? What special obligations are implicit in the relationship of the federal government to Indian tribes? What is the role of a school in the federal system as the system seeks to compensate or equalize for opportunity? 5) What alternative models for education exist outside American Society, and are such models more powerfully related to their client groups?

The Penn State Native American Administrator program began in 1970 as a result of a search by the head of the Indian desk of OEO for institutions and people ready to prepare Indian administrators. A precedent already existed in the Indian law training program at the University of New Mexico. A multi-cultural administrator training program had existed at that institution as well, from 1964-67. It had been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health training branch, and the director of that program had moved to Penn State University. The Division of Education Policy Studies was formed in 1969 to combine elements of higher education, educational administration, and cultural foundations of education so that students and staff could plan programs preparing professionals for policy making positions.

Some guidelines were laid down by the OEO; the program was not to fasten on facile solutions to Indian education like "Bilingual education" or "teaching English as a second Language." Instructional systems were to be explored as alternatives.

A program for training administrators for Philadelphia had begun at Penn State in early 1970. It was tempting to think of fusing the two programs, and the Philadelphia participants. However, each program had to maintain its identity if each was to be tailored to the realities of the client system and the trainees' perceptions of training requirements. No forced association was ever carried out.

Most of the participants in the inner city Philadelphia program are Blacks, while the Native American participants are rural, mainly, so there are two programs which are related in concept but are not identical. The agendas of the Indian and Philadelphia groups differ according to the participants' perceptions of objectives and priorities.

If the goals of a multi-cultural program is simply to replace white administrators with non-white administrators there is no need of a program. Substitution of parts can be accomplished more easily and cheaply by simply promoting non-whites into administrative positions. It all depends on what the agenda really is. If the agenda is to keep the system intact with symbolic representation of minorities in administrative positions, the classes in the mechanics of administration will suffice. Even if the program is changed to include theoretical directions such as behavior in organizations, a one-by-one approach will insure that each administrator trained will be on his own, and "on your own" or "one-by-one" changes no system. Orientation to the system does not insure a change orientation. Risk takers are not necessarily comfortable with a system or dedicated to it. Changes are not made by people who feel comfortable and assured with their perceptions of existing directions.

One hypothesis used in this multi-cultural program is that esprit brings trust among members of a group dedicated toward opening systems, so that an

informal organization with a norm of change can be formed. Another is that the selection of people who are uncomfortable or restless with what exists and who exhibit risk taking characteristics will form a group of change agents. A group during its campus residence training period can form a powerful affective bond dedicated to changing schools, the participants' sense of risk can be shared and even heightened. We know that an individual is more apt to take higher risks in a group which has a risky norm than he will in a group which does not have such a norm. Group bonds cannot be programmed, but they can be dampened and discouraged by encouraging individuals to compete with one another as we learned in the NIMH program at the University of New Mexico. The university system does not have to dilute quality of standards to encourage strong group formation. But training directors can encourage cooperation among participants to solve their immediate problems of getting through the degree program.

A seminar is our most powerful way of pulling the group together formally to allow the group to test itself and each member. One seminar is only for the Native American trainees and the Philadelphia seminar is only for those trainees. The agenda of the seminar is set by the participants. It is a time when theoretical notions can be tried out on either Indian or urban education problems. The seminar is a time of group identification of this collective professional goals, as well as a time to question the university's role and the staff's role in their present and future activity. The group has realized that their relationship does not end with their gaining a degree. The university and staff's relationship with the trainees' collective goals will continue even past graduation into the time of their efforts at changing educational organizations.

The impetus of the sixties in rebuilding educational systems has been lost. We are in a period of anomie, when goal identification is retreating into system maintenance. With the loss of public enthusiasm for reform of schools, the task of minority peoples to establish new goals and move schools toward them has become increasingly difficult. To be sure the courts are still stimulating schools toward equality of opportunity, but the legislative thrust and the popular enthusiasm behind all that has disappeared. So the task faced by Indian and Black administrators to open school systems has become much more difficult. It was easy until recently to excite the public's interest in Indian problems but the public's attention span is short and once a minority flexes its few muscles it has they lose the public's sympathy. The American public appears to like a minority group if it is really completely helpless. But the university can't be a fair weather friend. It has to be there even when the cause has turned sour with the public. Universities haven't demonstrated this kind of long range, fair weather or foul concern. But the participants in both programs have made it clear where they expect the university to be even when, or especially when, the weather roughens. A university can't really demonstrate this backing. Universities are such complex and slow-moving systems that they appear not to be able to respond to much of any stimuli. It's up to individuals in the university to keep it conscious of some kind of commitment even when the money begins to dry up.

The internship period which is an essential part of the master's program has been a time of testing of interns and university. In the master's program one-third of the thirty hours are obtained by internship and field work. The internship has been an opportunity to test the interns' communication network among themselves and the university's backing of the

intern in difficult situations. Changing the BIA is not an easy task. But the Indian interns attempted beginning in 1971-72. Among the tasks they attempted were involving advisory school boards in decision making, influencing bureau schools to adopt individualized instruction and differentiated staffing, involving citizen groups in Title I program approval, evaluating peripheral dormitories, laying the groundwork for moving one district from an all-Anglo board to Indian participation by convincing the Indian population that they had the right to vote in school board elections, working with Native village leadership in planning school activities, and working with tribal leaders and tribal education agencies in reorganizing the structure of education. The bureau itself for the first time assumed the responsibility of funding the special activities and professional travel of a group of Native interns. The interns were all promoted during the year of internship. A group of interns learned how to move the bureau, even a little, and they learned how to find and work with sympathetic change-oriented people in the Bureau--people like George Scott, Jim Hawkins, and Gabe Paxton; and people like Helen Scheirbeck and Don Sparks in the Office of Education, the people at IGE in Kettering, Ohio, Paul Salmon in AASA, Dillon Platero of Rough Rock, Vito Perrone of the New School, and Lloyd Trump of NASSP. They learned to pull aternative instructional systems into what had been the constricted climate of Indian education. Learning the constraints of a federal educational system, its autonomy and freedom from accountability was important as they tried to get alternatives adopted.

They also learned something about universities. They learned that a university possesses an independence that is valuable when throwing its backing behind an idea which is overdue, like Natives running their own schools. This idea might appear to be simply a power shift from one crowd

to another with no implications for children and communities but more of the same educational inertia, unless those in a university program can relate it to socially significant trends like the President's 1971 message calling for Indian self-determination, the need to change school systems and all other bureaucratic systems, the need to relate the economics of a Colonial system to human resources, the need to develop expertise of all kinds in the Native communities, the need to plan globally so as to integrate many concerns to a relevant educational system. An almost impossible agenda, perhaps, but one which must be tried. An insight the participants have brought to the program and the staff is the priority that education has, given all the other tribal and urban development needs, and that priority is not at the top. Perhaps it is a humbling but a necessary datum if administrator training is to be realistic.

The university's role is inevitably perceived in the training program as something other than passive or aloof. It is seen as involved, and this bears a cost. There are many who view the university in this kind of development program as one-sided, pro-Indian to the point of being racist, intervening in areas where it does not belong. While we may think we are on the side of the angels, there are many who perceive staff and participants as fallen angels.

Has the university itself been changed? The foregoing suggests a different kind of role for administrator training than heretofore, when people came to universities through self-selection, and passed through on their way to jobs. They didn't change either the university or the schools they went into, at least very significantly. A group of trainees can shake the university a little, and I say a little because universities tend to

encapsulate programs like this one with little overall effect. This training program has however, made some difference, so let me list them:

1. Selection processes have changed. We don't see magic in either GPA's or GRE and Miller Analogy Scores. The cumulative average for the Native Americans or the MAT so far has been 33, and the entering undergraduate grade point average was 2.1 on a scale of of 4.0. Those who have finished have about a 3.65 on a 4.0 scale in graduate work at Penn State. The institution decided to use (an expressed desire to change the system), as a criterion of selection to articulate in some way that change, and to verbalize a willingness to take a risk, set loose from the system somehow. As the trainees themselves began to select their successors they chose others like themselves.

   The trainees have asked for another mark of this cluster of traits, more behavioral, which is a demonstrated involvement in work outside the classroom related to tribal development, community development, or just helping people. They have looked for prospective trainees with a reputation of commitment to the cause as pertained by others. The university graduate school has not challenged the selection criteria in any way--it has left this decision to the Division of Education Policy Studies and the program staff. That was hard for the first graduate admissions officer to take, but he moved aside in 1970. That interesting vignette will not be described here.

2. The heavy internship component was novel in 1970-71, but no longer is. The graduate school is enthusiastic about it. With the experience of this program behind us, we are now working on an

external graduate degree program at the master's and doctoral level. The underbrush has not yet been cleared away for that step, but the trees are out of the way.

3. The institution has become eager and proud to have Native Americans on the campus. There is no problem in securing professors from other disciplines to work with the trainees. And they are learning a lot from the trainees. Rural Sociology, Human Development, Regional Planning, Economics, History, and Anthropology have taken their licks with grace and are eager to help plan new courses and experiences. The same reaction has been seen in the Philadelphia program. Professors in a rural environment have become eager to become involved in an urban-oriented program. The knowledge base of Indian education is opening up fast and the trainees at Penn State are persuing some powerful ideas. Most of the research is field-oriented and directed toward enlightening policy.

4. Hiring of professors has of course been affected. A prospective professor must relate to Native Americans and urban Blacks as well as Central Pennsylvanians and Northeastern students. The first Navajo professor of educational administration in the country, as well as an urban Black professor, have been added to the Division.

5. The university has worked through the University Council on Educational Administration to elevate the concern for preparing Native Administrators to national concern. UCEA with a reputation for excellence and creativity in programs has exerted its energy and influence toward establishing a national cluster of institutions

which are working on preparation programs with their local and regional tribal agencies. Close planning relationships have been established with other universities in securing backing for experimental programs with the BIA and Office of Education. Once the UCEA and a cluster of interested institutions establish their collective interest in preparing multi-cultural administrators, a new line of inquiry into training proposes and institutional goals ripens. The multi-cultural community is a jungle of new educational ideas and practice. It can turn into a no-man's land innocent of concepts like the community school programs, or it can be the ground for solid philosophical and theoretical advances, with humanistic power. Without the interaction of scholars and effectors there will be no change in the structure of ideas in education. If there is one line of ideas which has been powerful in American education, it has been the idea of the school as melting pot or acculturating agent. It is not enough to descry or destroy this ikon. We have to construct an alternative. The ideology of the multi-cultural school in a changing society will not be simple to construct and test. Philosophical, historical, and psychological positions require re-examination to allow a new ideology to emerge. As an example, Cremin's work on the Colonial School has to be recognized as an example of how poor our intellectual resources are. We have to go far beyond his work to discover data he is unaware of or ignores. Searching for a more complete historical foundation of education in North America is a monumental task, but essential, as it will provide us with a clear

picture of our own history of alternatives, of tribal schools, folk schools, and a multitude of institutions which provide a more accurate picture than the convergent notions of the Puritan School. Schools must change into something they now are not if they are to satisfy the emerging expectations of the multi culture. Administrative roles must be recreated. This means that universities have to rethink the path of changing social expectations of education to changing school goals, to expectations of administrators, back to the relationship of training institutions to role creators which are the community of the school. The Path analysis of school goals back to an institution's program requires work with a community, especially clients, on a peer basis. Several institutions are now involving client groups as training resource people. A next step is the participation of clients in building theory and philosophy for multi-cultural schools.

6. Groups of trainees or participants are more powerful than individuals. The Native American group has become a primary group in fact. We are trying to think of rationales for groups and administrator trainees. The individuals appear to be "out of it" faced with two such strong groups. Groups can do more on campus for each other and can do more later. Tightly knit groups are very effective in exposing carelessness and fraud and lack of ability in a staff. Too many groups could make far too much exclusivity, of course, and could create real communication problems. The two training programs will be more closely related in the future.

Both groups have high regard for each other but have different role models and different training purposes.

7. The Division of Education Policy Studies has had an objective of creating a policy studies degree, replacing educational administration and two other degrees, for the past three years. The vicissitudes of boundary maintenance and personality conflict makes that a perilous voyage, but the two programs and the professional goals of the participants has made it more necessary to move toward preparing policy planners. That is a non-accurate term for the participants than the term "system administrators" for what is emerging. The positions the graduates have moved into are policy making positions, and the institutions with which we are cooperating want it that way. When one is forced into the game of numbers, that is how many principalships and superintendencies are available to the minority administrators being turned out, it becomes even more necessary to define the locus of the future action as policy making positions rather than line or line and staff positions. The number of line positions available for Indian administrators is small, but policy is made not alone or especially in line positions but in a multitude of professional locations at national, regional, state, intermediate, and local levels. It is imperative that we define well and locate well the Native American policy maker so that he can make a maximum impact at once. The idea of putting him on the bottom rung of the ladder is frankly a waste of his time and the institution's investment.
8. The next step viewed as important for the division is to build a series of field seminars which will keep graduates and interns in

close touch with the institution and with each other. It will be at least as important as turning out policy makers. The Philadelphia program is already doing this; it is harder and more expensive for the far-flung Native graduates to participate, but no less necessary. We envision a 5-year effort of this kind.

The disquieting future of the programs as seen by this author is partly the retrenchment in federal efforts of any kind. Closer to home is the lack of success or, better said, small effort in involving clients in the training program. If we want to open up systems, we have to get ideas from the people. Mao Tse Tung has some interesting advice on the people's desires for the system, but we really need frequent face-to-face contact, and discourse as equals on the problem of rebuilding educational systems the way people desire. We are encased in plastic disks and seem not to hear from the outside. Clients need to become staff adjuncts of university level training programs. Robert Norris has a proposal for bringing in Indian leaders and a sample of clients to tell staff and trainees how to view schools. We need penetrating analyses, which are worth much more than need surveys of how people see schools and what they really want. The university must get this kind of input not only from leaders but from followers. We are much too distant from those who worry whether their children will finish school, and what will happen to them after leaving school. Multi-cultural training programs could become and probably will succeed in becoming "nests of eagles" as they say in Latin America, or the nesting grounds of elites. I use the term elite, not as an exclusivist kind of group, but as a group selected with a high purpose. An elitist preparation is unavoidable in the sense that there has to be a first cadre, which, if

good, looks too good, too removed from tribe, and ghetto. What the elite does with its institutions and whether it acts for the good of its clients is the real criterion of the program.

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